

Euphemisms: Dirty Talk in Disguise

Nehemiah 13:23-25 - In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and Moab. As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people. So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.

Introduction:

A. Jesus tells us in Matthew 12:36-37 that the words we use have meaning.

Matthew 12:36-37 - "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. 37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

B. Whether it is because of our lifestyle or simply because we live in the world does not matter. We, as Christians, tend to live far too close to the world and thus the habits and language of Ashdod (Neh. 13:23-25) rubs off on us.

C. Are slang words or euphemisms wrong? They are words used in place of what is generally recognized as "bad" or "unkind" words. They are in frequent use throughout society in general and even by Christians.

I. Unwholesome Speech

A. There are three kinds of unwholesome speech

1. Obscene - sexually related unwholesome speech
2. Profane - religiously related unwholesome speech
3. Vulgar - elimination related unwholesome speech.
4. Eph. 4:29 tells us the Christian's speech is to be for edifying or building each other up

Ephesians 4:29 - Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

- a. The Christian's speech is to serve as a blessing to those who hear it
- b. Herein lies the standard for our speech patterns.

B. There are three ways in which people use profane speech

1. Uttering a curse upon something

Matthew 5:22 - "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

- a. To curse another person or even to curse God's creation is a sin against God
- b. God made the earth and people as a blessing

2. Using God's name in vain

Exodus 20:7 - "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

- a. This principle is still true today
- b. God does not want us to refer to Him in a vain or empty way
- c. He is God and deserves our constant and complete respect
- d. To use His name in an empty way is to not give God the respect He deserves

3. Utilizing something God made holy and making it common

Ezekiel 7:21 - 'I will give it into the hands of the foreigners as plunder and to the wicked of the earth as spoil, and they will profane it.

- a. The sexual relationship is an example
- b. God made that relationship to be set apart between husband and wife

Hebrews 13:4 - Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

- c. If we speak concerning that relationship as if it is just another common or casual activity then we denigrate it
- d. Far too many speak of it in a flippant and joking way

Ephesians 5:3-4 - But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

II. *Where Do Euphemisms Fit In*

- A. So where do euphemisms fit in this doctrine? What are they?
 1. "Fib," or "stretching the truth," do you understand it means a lie?
 2. "Affair," or "fling," do you understand it means adultery?
 3. "Living together," or "in a relationship" do you understand it means fornication?
 4. "Gay" do you understand it means homosexual?
 5. "The latest," do you understand it means gossip?
 6. "Risqué," do you understand it means immodest?
 7. "Off color," or "colorful language" do you understand it means dirty jokes and cursing?
 8. "Had a little too much," do you understand it means drunk?
 9. You know what euphemisms are, you know what they mean, and you know what the speaker intended with them.
- B. A euphemism is using a word that doesn't sound as bad as the one that most consider offensive, but the meaning of the word is the same. So, there is no change in meaning when we use a euphemism.
- C. Suppose I approached someone sensitive about his loss of hair and said, "Man, are you getting bald." That would be rather offensive. However, suppose I suggested the following, "You possess fewer follicle appendages on the cutaneous apex of your cranial structure, anterior to the sagittal suture and posterior to the lambdoidal suture, where said follicle appendages habitually germinate." That is a euphemism for going bald. The intent is less offensive, but the meaning is the same.
- D. So what do many of the euphemisms commonly used mean?
 1. Gosh, golly - God
 2. Jeez, gee - Jesus
 3. Cripes, criminy - Christ
 4. Heck - hell
 5. Dang, darn - damn
 6. And so on
 - a. These are just some of the ones for profane unwholesome speech
 - b. We have not even mentioned the ones for vulgar and obscene speech
 7. No one says, "What in Allah's name is going on?" No one texts "OMB" for "Oh My Buddha." You intend to say God.

III. *God's Standard For Christian Speech*

A. The standards of God much different than the world

Isaiah 55:8-9 - "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

1. The world thinks lightly of profane speech calling it free speech
2. Jesus teaches us to take all speech seriously

Matthew 12:36-37 - "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

3. Speech is important, for it reveals the heart of man

Matthew 12:34-35 - "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.

4. Words manifest Christian conduct

Colossians 3:8-10 - But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him--

B. What standards do you have in speech?

1. Do you cringe when you hear the filthy language used on television?
2. Would you be embarrassed to use those words in front of your grandmother or mother?
3. How do you speak when you are not in church services?

C. God despises a perverse mouth

Proverbs 4:24 - Put away from you a deceitful mouth And put devious speech far from you.

Proverbs 8:13 - "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.

Proverbs 15:28 - The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

1. Christians control their speech

James 1:26 - If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless.

2. So, you expressed your surprise or anger and used your American right to free speech
3. You edified no one, reduced your influence, hurt your listeners, put souls and risk, including your own. Feel better?

Conclusion:

- A. We must, if we expect to be pleasing to God, be aware of the things God expects of us and the things that dis-please Him.
- B. We are all aware of the use of euphemisms in the world. The question is, "Are we dishonoring God by being guilty of profaning His name?"